

# ITCHEN Valley News

Issue 47 November 2017

For Avington, Easton, Ichen Abbas and Martyr Worthy





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# WELCOME to the Valley News

The clocks are changing and for the winter months there will be more darkness than daylight. I have just been in a hilltop village in Spain and at night there was nothing to be seen in the valley below except for a small industrial estate which for some reason was lit up so that it could probably be seen from space! The South Downs National Park was recently named the world's newest International Dark Sky Reserve and they certainly feel that the dark skies of the South Downs are worth protecting. Do you feel nervous in the darkness? Do you like the dark skies and seeing the moon and stars and using a torch to see what you need to do outside? Or do you prefer to have street and security lights so that you can always see what you are doing? The Itchen Valley News is always pleased to hear your views.

In any case there will be plenty of lights in the sky come Bonfire Night, and I am sure that the Easton party will be full of bangs and sparkles as well as plenty of good food and drink. Do try and warn your neighbours before you let off your own fireworks so that nervous pets can be looked after.

I am delighted to be able to print an article about Lord Grey and his love of the Itchen Valley on page 9 - what a sensible person he sounds! I was rather taken aback though at the list of birds that are never or seldom seen here any more - some of them I had never even heard of. I was also thrilled to receive Steve Percy's

photo of youthful skiffing (page 18) – does anyone else have early photos of memorable

moments? The Editors would love to share them! Our mantra is always that we can only print what our contributors send us, so do please keep up the flow of your announcements of future events, your reviews of past events, your stories of what you have been doing and what you have enjoyed so that the inbox at [itchenvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:itchenvalleynews@gmail.com) is once again overflowing to greet next month's editor, Tony Gaster  
*Verity Coleman*

Can you identify the bridge in the cover photo? Answer on Page 40!



## Itchen Valley News

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## What's On

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### **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November 10.00am -12.30pm First Aid Course in aid of Youth Options**

Itchen Abbas Village Hall

The Winchester committee for Youth Options helps to raise valuable funds to support disadvantaged local children and young people.

Do please come to our first aid course and upgrade your life saving skills. You never know when you might need them, so all ages are welcome. You may have read about the chap who swallowed a live fish and was saved by CPR!

Tickets £20 from Tessa Love 865550  
tjlove@btinternet.com

### **Guy Fawkes Bonfire and Fireworks Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November from 6.00pm**

Easton Village Hall

Who makes the best Guy?

Come and join us for our annual Bonfire and Fireworks celebrations including the

Best Guy Competition. Bring your family, friends and

homemade Guys from 6pm onwards

and enjoy a cup of mulled wine and other refreshments, hot dogs, cakes and glow sticks. The bonfire will be lit at about 6:30 after the winning Guy has been chosen, followed by our fantastic fireworks.

See you there!

*Ina Williams on behalf of Easton Village Hall*



### **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 7.00pm**

#### **The Bereavement Journey**

St John's Church, Itchen Abbas.

Further details from Amanda Denniss 779832 Alex Pease 791010 or Elaine Labram 07702 173001

emlabram@gmail.com

*Elaine Labram*

### **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 7.00pm**

#### **Upper Itchen Valley Society AGM**

Martyr Worthy Village Hall with speaker Jeremy Legge, Director of the Test and Itchen Association.

*UIVS Committee*

### **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 10.30am -1.00pm**

#### **Itchen Abbas School Christmas Fair**

Itchen Abbas Village Hall

**See flyer on Page 21**

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November - Annual Remembrance Sunday Parade**

The Royal British Legion, Itchen Valley Branch, is holding its Annual Sunday Remembrance Parade for 2017 in front of the Lychgate at St Mary's Church, Easton on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November at 10.50 am. Further details from Richard Seymour - Hon. Sec. 779401.

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 7.00pm Royal British Legion AGM**

Martyr Worthy Village Hall

All members are encouraged to attend.

*Richard Seymour*

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November Easton Pantomime Box Office opens**

The Easton Players

Present **Dick**

**Whittington.** Come and see Dick

Whittington and share his journey from rags to riches thanks to his superb rat-catching cat.





Tickets £10.00 for adults and £5.00 for children up to the age of 12.

**See flyer on Page 25**

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 3.00pm A well-known garden designer comes to Itchen Abbas!**  
Itchen Abbas Village Hall



There is more than a little of the theatrical in James Alexander-Sinclair's gardening lectures. Perhaps this is not surprising as the first career he pursued was acting and, when the plum roles did not come his way, his exasperated sister suggested he help dig the garden! The rest, as they say, is history.

The Valley Gardeners are delighted to welcome James to speak to us following our AGM and his talk is called *Dancing through borders*. This intriguing title will certainly give James the material for an inspired and entertaining talk and we would be delighted to welcome you to come and share in what is bound to be a fun and dramatic afternoon.

We are charging £5 per head and we hope you will stay after the talk for tea and cake and a chance to chat to James and our Valley Gardeners' members. If you have any questions, please contact me on [catherinehahn1@gmail.com](mailto:catherinehahn1@gmail.com).

*Catherine Hahn*

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November from 6.15pm Winchester Churches Nightshelter Supporters' Evening and AGM**

St Peter's Church conference centre (opposite the Nightshelter on Jewry Street)

The Nightshelter's Annual Supporters' Evening and AGM will feature special guest speakers, films and talks about homelessness and the impact of the Nightshelter's work over the last year. There will also be home-made refreshments and the chance to meet and chat to Nightshelter staff, residents and fellow supporters. Please do put the date in your diary for what promises to be an informative and fun evening. No need to book – please just turn up on the night.

*Hannah Gurnham*

*Marketing and PR Co-ordinator*

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November, 7.00pm for 7.30pm Itchen Valley Churches Auction and Supper**

Easton Village Hall

A taster of some of the delights on offer: sailing on the Solent, name a racehorse, fabulous flowers, hampers, a week in Verbier, drive a vintage tractor and a farmhouse cream tea, tour of Judes Ice Cream, painting of St. Mary's Church, wine, jams and chutneys, toy tractor and much more. Treat yourself or buy the perfect gift for Christmas. Tickets and more details from Vanessa Rosewell 841 182,

[vanessarosewell@btconnect.com](mailto:vanessarosewell@btconnect.com)

**See flyer on Page 23**

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 6.30pm for 7.30pm Portraits of Power**  
At Winchester Discovery Centre, SO23 8SB

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**The Old Forge Twyford SO21 1BF**

A lecture by Hendrika Foster in aid of Winchester Go LD, a local charity enabling people with learning disabilities

Tickets £16 (to include complimentary drink and canapes) from the Discovery Centre, tel: 01962 873603

*Susie Evershed*

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November 10.00am**  
**Who Cares talk**

St Swithun's Matryr Worthy

Finding hope: 'When relationships are difficult'

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7.45pm**  
**Itchen Valley Choral Society Annual Christmas Concert**

Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Do come and join us; we will be singing music of Christmas, Folk and Film with audience participation. Tickets (on the door) £10 to include fine music followed by good food and drink.

*Vernon Tottle*

## SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2018**  
**Martyr Worthy Plant Sale at Chilland House.**

After another wonderful year in 2016, we are looking ahead to the 2018 plant sale. As in previous years, we would love contributions from the beautiful and diverse gardens of the valley. We are looking for both unusual and favourite plants that can be propagated or divided, ready to sell next April. Do contact us if you are able to provide plants or cuttings from your own garden, know where suitable

plants may be available or can provide some time to assist with dividing and potting up plants. We also need large plastic flower pots. If you can help with any of the above please contact Katherine Impey 779645, [katherine@impey.com](mailto:katherine@impey.com) or Sophie Jackson 779764, [sophie@chilland.co.uk](mailto:sophie@chilland.co.uk)



## Home Start - Winchester

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October saw a packed Village Hall in Itchen Abbas as the Home Start charity held a champagne quiz. Home Start helps families with young children, and once again the village hall proved an ideal venue. The quiz tested our knowledge in many areas and members of the winning team all received a bottle of champagne. It was an opportunity to meet new people and of course raise money. In addition to the quiz there was a raffle and one of the prizes was a first edition

Winchester Monopoly. An excellent supper was served midway; all in all a splendid evening with the expectation of more than £3000 raised to support Home Start.

*Tony Gaster.*



## Easton WI

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Every year we plan a garden meeting, so in October members visited Hilliers Arboretum on a warm, sunny afternoon. We wandered through the different areas of the gardens and especially enjoyed the variety of garden sculptures placed in the borders, made by different artists in a variety of media. Congratulations to Jill Croft whose poem has gone forward from the Hampshire Federation to the National Final of the Lady Denman Cup Competition. She will be receiving her certificate at the Autumn Meeting at Basingstoke at the end of October. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7.15pm in Easton Village Hall when our speaker will be Jemma Giles talking about Keeping Strong and Active in your Third Age. *Sallie Peake*

## Jackie's County Corner for October



Did you join us in Alresford for the Apple Day? It was great fun! If not – please come along next year! I recently met with Skanska, the new Highways partner of HCC. The new service is being branded 'Hampshire Highways' and is going digital, including the reporting of potholes etc. I queried

how this can be done more easily for faults on rural roads where the position cannot be made clear enough. It seems your smart phone may be the answer... To log highway faults on this system, photograph the fault on your camera. That will provide the system with site information from your camera, so they know where the fault is. To log all of your road / footway / hedge problems, please go to [www.hants.gov.uk/roads](http://www.hants.gov.uk/roads) and follow the prompts.

This 'consultations' section has a lot of email links I'm afraid.

There is a consultation from the Department for Communities and Local Government on Housing. Called 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places', it will almost certainly be something you might like to respond to.

Deadline 11.45pm on 9<sup>th</sup> November <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>

The South Downs National Park Local Plan is out for consultation until 21<sup>st</sup> November. Please look at it even if you are not in SDNP - it may have implications for where you live or work. Go to [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk). The consultation link is on the front page. Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal has given her support to rural housing. You can see her speech and many other interesting article at [www.rsnonline.org.uk](http://www.rsnonline.org.uk)

Massive tree removal is due to take place at Abbotstone this winter. This is being done to satisfy a stewardship scheme which has just 3 years left to run. Steve Ord, the Countryside Ranger, is happy to take the public on a walk around in November. Please contact me (details below) or Steve



01962 860948 to join a guided walk on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November  
Tt2019 is the headline for the Budget reductions at HCC. The total reduction is £140m. The proposal includes cutting rural and community bus services, closing Recycling Centres, and taking away funding for non-statutory services. An example is School Crossing Patrols.

You will be kept abreast of cuts to services that will affect the public as each item goes to 'consultation', but it all sounds dire.

I attended the Social Work Conference in October and was especially interested to hear about the progress of the Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry. They are systematically working through institutional abuse in thirteen different areas, but alongside this, they are offering any individual who has suffered abuse an opportunity to give their own story in The Truth Project. There is counselling before and after to ensure that you are comfortable with the process. More information can be obtained from: [contact@iicsa.org.uk](mailto:contact@iicsa.org.uk)

*Cllr Jackie Porter,*

*[jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk). 01962 791054, text: 07973 696 085*

## Boomtown grants

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This year, Boomtown Fair has raised a record-breaking £116,000 for charity across an ever expanding list of organisations both local to Winchester, nationally and internationally.

Boomtown has made Matterley Estate its home since 2011 and over the years has worked with and donated to numerous local and national charities. 2017 saw the event expand its charity networks even further by teaming up with a record breaking number of charities including local organisations

Street Reach, a Winchester based youth outreach organisation, (£8,700), Hampshire Air Ambulance (£8,100), Trinity Winchester, Naomi House, and the South Downs National Park Trust.  
*Katherine James, Media Manager*

### Additional note

For the second year running Boomtown raised £10,000 for the five parishes that border the festival site. The 2016 Community Support Fund was allocated to a range of community projects across the parishes including vital restoration projects, contributing to broadband technology, footpath and wild flower planting schemes and helping to purchase equipment for play areas, local clubs and schools. The 2017 Community Support fund will once again be administered by the Parish Council. Itchen Valley Parish Council plans to issue a timetable for bids soon. Community and Charitable organisations in the Valley will be eligible to bid against the funds, an open meeting to discuss bids will be announced; please note the full eligibility criteria will be similar to last year.

*Patrick Appleby, Itchen Valley Parish Council*

## A hidden gem:

### 'It was for us a lovely refuge'

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When walking along the footpath from St John the Baptist Church, Itchen Abbas to Chilland, have you ever wondered about the enclosed area beyond the lime avenue in the corner of the paddock? If curiosity has got the better of you, and you decide to have a look, you will know from the sign that it is the site of a cottage owned by Sir Edward Grey who has been our longest serving Foreign Secretary



between December 1905 and December 1916.

The cottage was built in 1890 when Edward was already the Liberal MP for Berwick-on-Tweed. His Northumberland home was too distant for short breaks and he lit upon the idea of a cottage in this part of Hampshire, as he had been familiar

with it since his days at Winchester College. It served as a bolt-hole away from his duties as an MP – though he often brought his work with him. Edward and Dorothy both found London intensely distasteful. Edward compared it to being in prison and they would escape to the cottage as often as possible, either on Friday evenings or very early on Saturday mornings, to Winchester or to the little station at Itchen Abbas. Here they enjoyed being away from people and could walk, fish, cycle and watch their beloved birds. They always maintained that the place was dearer to them than anywhere else.

It was built with brick foundations and chimney stack, wooden walls covered with trellis and a roof of corrugated iron. There was also an outhouse. It soon became covered with roses, honeysuckle and Virginia creeper and flowers surrounded it. At the front, facing the river, was a lawn that became a bedroom on hot nights; from here they could enjoy the river sounds. They rarely had visitors but were



happy for others to use the cottage when they were not there. It was here that W H Hudson stayed with his wife to research and write 'Hampshire Days'. He noted with approval that there were '*no startling red geraniums, no cineraria, no calceolarias nor other gardeners' abominations to hurt one's eyes and make one's head ache*'. It was a glorious tangle. No wonder, therefore, that an amazing number of birds frequented and nested in the garden and the adjoining chalk pit (which the Greys rented). Some are now completely absent or rarely seen – for instance nightingale, red-backed shrike, curl bunting, wryneck, grasshopper warbler, redstart, nightjar and common sandpiper. Sir Andrew Motion (Poet Laureate 1999-2009) has also described Grey's encounter with stone curlew not far away in his poem '*Linnet Down*'. Sadly, Dorothy died tragically in 1906. This was a blow from which Edward never fully recovered. He continued to come here alone until the much-loved place burned down in January 1923. One of the Drover sisters who looked after the Greys had left bedding to air near one of the stoves. She hardly knew how to break the news to Sir Edward.

So many people still ask whether he could or could not have prevented war. The US Secretary of War, Newton D Baker, declared that 'if any human agency could have prevented the World War, Sir Edward Grey would have prevented it'. Churchill felt that it was not the fault of Grey that his activities and conciliatory endeavours did not succeed and said 'I watched in admiration his activities at the Foreign Office and cool skill in Council'.

Throughout his life, Grey felt strongly about the inequalities of life. He never

thought of himself as better than others and was admired for his frankness, tolerance, sincerity, honesty and sense of humour. His private problems and public disappointments never dulled his spirit. He made the best of things and even those who visited him towards the end of his life always seemed to have been amused and cheered by him.

The site is now managed, for Winchester College, as a small nature reserve in memory of the Greys. It is a mixture of untamed areas and tamed ones. The idea is to encourage biodiversity but also to allow people to see where the cottage stood. There is a seat, so do go and enjoy the atmosphere, the view and the birds but please take litter home, leave bricks where they are and close the gate securely. Very many thanks.

*Pat Brockway*

For more information a book by Pat Brockway is available, 'Sir Edward Grey: More than a Politician' (second edition), published by Winchester College and available from the archivist. Price £12

## Time to say goodbye

Amanda Denniss, Rector of the Itchen Valley Parish since April 2015, has announced that she will be leaving the parish during January 2018 to spend more time with her family.



We offer her our very best wishes for the remainder of her time in the Itchen Valley and for the future.

*Editor*

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## Lightsabres for Itchen Valley residents

---

George Lucas was the director for the first six episodes of the Star Wars film series. In addition to inventing many new cinematographic techniques, he also solved the problem of how to produce the light sabres used by the Jedi Knights. Those of you familiar with the films will know these are similar to fluorescent lights attached to a handle that the characters can wave around in combat. Alas, when he tried to make them from neon strip-lights, they just didn't work on film.

In the end he came up with reflective tape attached to simple wooden rods that were lit carefully from the side of the acting area. A little computerised optical enhancement after filming created the effect George was after; the hum as they were waved around was more difficult to produce but finally he got the lightsabres that became so imitated by thousands of children in school playgrounds.

This autumn and winter please take your own lightsabre with you when walking outdoors in the dark. If you don't have one, a simple reflective jacket will protect you from oncoming cars just as efficiently.

May the force be with you.

*Vernon Tottle*

## From our City Councillor

---



Major development, as I like to tell folk when parading my Chartered Surveyor credentials, is virtually always a more difficult and

nuanced process than is suggested by 'Homes under the Hammer'. The most advanced of the City Council's three main projects is the proposed new sport and leisure centre at Bar End but, after a promising start, it has now hit a bit of a hitch. Rising costs and the availability of a centre in a neighbouring district have been cited as justification for a proposal to reduce the size of the main hall from a 12-badminton court hall to an 8-badminton court hall. A 12-badminton court hall can be divided into 3 basketball or netball courts or be used by badminton, table tennis and gymnastics all at the same time. A 12-badminton court hall is what the Council approved last year, along with a 50 metre swimming pool, and the current debate revolves around the extent to which the ambitions of all those other sports will be compromised by the reduction. My own view is that, until it is clearly proven otherwise and accepted by the sports clubs, such a reduction would be compromising and should be resisted. Hopefully, the debate will soon be resolved so that the project can be put back on track.

Similar debates about development are to be found in all corners of the district, and are bound to increase as the pressure mounts to increase the national housing stock. Locally, I still

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have many concerns about the proposal at Sun Lane. There are significant transport issues and debate about how it will adversely affect Alresford, in addition to which I have concerns about whether the affordable housing provision promised will actually be delivered. I and fellow local councillor Ernie Jeffs have stood down from the Planning Committee so that we are free to express our personal views. Elsewhere within the ward, I feel that the SDNP's proposal for only an additional 8 houses in Itchen Abbas over the next decade, is too restrictive and will not resolve the problems of a lack of affordable housing that councillors constantly hear about.

Best wishes.

*Kim Gottlieb*

*Winchester City Councillor for Alresford  
and Itchen Valley 07795 494919*

## Bookworm

---

Years ago, in a school text book, I was surprised to come across 'The Story Teller' which is a savage tale, rather in the vein of some fairy tales. However, it is very funny and clever and the class loved it.

The great thing about Saki's often

savage stories is  
their cruel wit.

They are anti-  
morality tales.

They are about  
the world

inhabited by  
Hector Hugh

Monro (Saki was  
his nom de

plume) and his  
two siblings

when they were  
sent home from

Burma, as

children, after the premature death of their mother. This was the late Victorian era of spinster aunts, servants and governesses.

The drab world which he portrays is full of rules, all beginning with the word 'don't. All the bright, colourful and joyful things of life have been hidden from sight in the lumber room or the tool shed and the children in his stories have to find all their entertainment in their own imagination. The aunts, beside whom Lady Bracknell, Lady Catherine de Bourgh and especially the aunts of Bertie Wooster seem positively benign, are portrayed as such monsters that the reader experiences little if any sadness at any dreadful fate which might befall them.

Not all of Saki's short stories are about children. His satirical evocation of the Edwardian world in which he lived as an adult is an extremely sardonic one. He views the Upper Classes as more concerned with style than sincerity, as cynically willing to sacrifice morals to convenience and as people who know no moderation. His accounts are sometimes simply hilarious and sometimes as subtle as the writings of Jane Austen. Amongst my very favourites are 'The Lumber Room',

'The Byzantine Omelette', 'The Unrest-Cure' and 'Sredni Vashtar' and there are plenty of others. The short story is not my favourite form of narrative but these really are gems that can be read again and again.

*Clare Gaster*

## From the Rectory

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‘Where are your medals, Alex?’ It’s a common refrain at the Annual Regimental Dinner of the 4<sup>th</sup> (V)

Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets. We

are invited to wear dinner jackets ‘and decorations’. So I try to mumble something about having ‘left them at home, by mistake’. The truth is, of course, that I don’t have any. I served in an extended period of peace, now known as ‘The Cold War’. And yet many, many of the soldiers of my generation of the Territorial Army now have endless service decorations: Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Afghanistan. I left the TA in 1983, when I was posted by my law firm to Dubai, just after the Falklands War – we thought we were ready for that, of course (how foolish we were), but were not called upon....thank goodness! But I never had that opportunity to see if I had the competence or the courage to respond well in conflict. Exercises are one thing and it is easy enough to make a complete fool of yourself on those (and I did so on many occasions)...but operations (when you are being deployed for real and people’s lives are at stake) are something else altogether. Those medals are well deserved. Indeed, there is one of my former fellow officers, who is a little younger than me, who I think has been involved in every conflict the Armed Forces have fought since the 1980s. He got

himself qualified as a Forward Air Controller (the ground liaison for fighter and helicopter ground attack) and had the luxury of being rung up by the MoD and being *invited* (in those days, I think, without a mobilisation of the whole Territorial Army, we could not be *ordered* into the field) to take part in each mission that the Armed Services were involved in. If the bookshop that he owned and ran had been a bit quiet, he would close it up and go off for a few months soldiering and then come back after the operation was completed, open it up again and carry on business.

It must be something about owning bookshops. I met another former TA officer the other day at a dinner, also a bookshop owner, who, when acting as a NATO liaison officer in Kosovo, attacked (only supported by his driver and bodyguard) a Serbian sniper who was holding up an entire Italian military column (these stories tend to get more exciting as the evening develops). The sniper ran off and the officer was given a tremendous ticking off by his Italian Commanding Officer for taking unnecessary risks - but then they gave him a medal for gallantry!

It’s Remembrance Sunday this month on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November and I do hope that many of you will join us at St Mary’s Easton, in remembering before God the members of our Armed Forces who have given their lives in active service for our country. It is that word ‘service’ which is particularly resonant for me this year and I intend to speak about this on that Sunday. There is something which is deeply countercultural today about putting your life on the line for others. Even being willing to commit to sacrifice our time or money for others seems quite a challenge for many these days, let





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Thursday 9th November at 10.45 am

Friday 10th November at 2.00 pm

Monday 20th November at 10.45 am

Tuesday 28th November at 9.30 am

Wednesday 6th December at 2.00 pm

Please contact the school office on 01962 779310 to book your tour. We look forward to meeting you!



[www.itchenabbasprimary.co.uk](http://www.itchenabbasprimary.co.uk)

Admissions information can be found online at [www.hants.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hants.gov.uk/admissions)

**Application deadline is 15th January 2018**

alone sacrificing our lives...

Whilst I would not wish to push the analogy too far, and the squaddies I know would find it ridiculous, there is something which resonates of Christ in being willing to risk giving your life up for others, and those who do this, whether in the Armed Forces or not (we can think of other professions who do this also). And I, for one, am deeply humbled by the willingness of so many over all our generations now and in the past to do so.

As Jesus said "Greater love has no-one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" John 15:13

Alex Pease

## Stardom Thwarted?

My daughter Caroline recently took me on a sentimental journey to re-visit the scene of a minor childhood

triumph of sixty years ago. As a member of a large family, my brothers and I were regularly packed off during the long summer holidays to stay at my Aunt Grace's hotel, the Creg Malin, at Peel on the west coast of the Isle of Man.

During one such stay in 1957, my older brother David and I formed a skiffle group with three other guests at the



hotel. With me on the washboard, we performed some Lonnie Donegan hits at the weekly talent competition in the Marine Hall, winning first prize for the under 16s. The band leader Ivy Benson came to audition us and asked us to appear on her show at the Gaiety Theatre in Douglas, the island's capital. Alas, with boat tickets bought and a new school term starting, we had to decline.



Who knows whether our appearance with Ivy might have led to fame, fortune and a glittering career in show business? Que sera.

Steve Percy

## From Our MP

---

First of all this month, I found myself in Manchester recently and one thing I remember from the Prime Minister's speech was that a new generation of council houses will be built with an extra £2bn going into the affordable housing budget. The move will also allow more homes to be built for social rent.

The news follows Winchester's lead, as the council here has been building council homes for years through its New Homes Programme. I've opened many over the years, including the striking Barron Close in Micheldever and The Dell in Kings Worthy and the

timing couldn't have been better as WCC announced a few days later it will double the amount of council homes built by 2020. More on this from your City Councillors I am sure. While in Manchester, I took the chance to visit the largest single site cancer centre in Europe at The Christie Hospital wearing my Ministerial hat. The Proton Beam Cancer treatment it will offer is a first for the UK (currently children with certain forms of cancer have to visit the US) and I was blown away by the engineering miracle taking place. It's basically a mini Hadron Collider and will not only save lives, it will dramatically reduce the long-term impact this kind of radiation treatment can cause. We should remember, when listening to Radio 4 and especially when watching Channel 4 news, there is good news out there and so much hope.

As Parliament returns, we're busy with Brexit legislation of course (and much else besides) but my work in the constituency seems to be on fast forward with constituency Fridays (and weekends) busier than ever.

After a lovely letter from a volunteer, I visited Winchester Bereavement Support recently. Based at Richard Steel & Partners, they've been at it since 1982, providing bereavement support to anyone over the age of 18 living locally via a team of trained volunteer visitors. I found their stories both inspiring and moving; [www.winchesterbereavementsupport.org.uk](http://www.winchesterbereavementsupport.org.uk)

One other thing to mention is the new health care hub I opened last month. It's the new arrangement, under the banner Mid Hampshire Healthcare, which will enable you to see a GP, Nurse and Healthcare



assistant in the evenings and at weekends. The new Winchester hub, which helps us deliver on our extended access commitment for General Practice, is based at the Badger Farm Surgery next to Sainsbury's.

You book a routine appointment by ringing your own GP surgery while urgent appointments at the hub will be booked by the out of hours GP service via NHS 111 when your GP surgery is closed. See more [www.stevebrine.com/extendedaccessGP](http://www.stevebrine.com/extendedaccessGP)

You can find more about my work, locally and in Westminster, via my website.

Steve Brine MP

Winchester & Itchen Valley 791110

## Our Wild Valley - Never stops growing!



We may have a very warm November, like October, for plants and fungi to continue to flourish, growing and doing their thing! I thought I had found an unusual plant on the footpath near the river (Chilland Lane) - the petals were so bright white, and glistened amongst the green frothy leafage behind. It's just chickweed, a common plant that flowers all year around in vegetable patches and arable fields; usually small and discreet it fairly shouted out at me to take a photo, so I did.



A busy collection of fungi has grown up on a dead log, beautifully camouflaged amongst fallen leaves but on a bed of bright green moss. I think they are something like *Pluteus cervinus* (with free gills and pink spores) which are common and visible from April to December. They were worthy of being painted like many other autumn scenes this month, so I hope you can get out to enjoy them.

Sophie Rogers





# **Itchen Abbas School Christmas Fair**

**Saturday 11th November  
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## Itchen valley church services

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### Sunday 5th November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	Avington
10am	All Age Service	Martyr Worthy
11am	Matins	Easton

### Sunday 12th November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	Easton
10.50am	Remembrance Sunday	Easton
6pm	Evensong	Martyr Worthy

### Sunday 19th November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	Martyr Worthy
10am	Informal Service	Easton
6pm	Evensong	Avington

### Sunday 26th November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	Itchen Abbas
10am	Parish Communion	Martyr Worthy
6pm	Taize	Easton

#### **Rector**

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#### **Assistant Priest**

Rev Alex Pease      791010      rev@ampease.co.uk

#### **Licensed Lay Minister**

Mr Gerry Stacey      620263      gstacey@easynet.co.uk

**Parish website:** <http://itchenvalleychurches.org.uk/>

#### **Itchen Valley Churchwardens**

Robin Greenwood 779540; Andrew Impey 779645;

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## From the Parish Council,

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In August, when we hoped to have a break, Winchester City Council sent us a long list of items which had originated from



the Parish Plan. The aim was to find out how much progress we had made with each item on the list. At first sight this looked quite a formidable task but having gone through the list and consulted with some of those who were involved in producing the Parish Plan it has been pleasing to see the number of items where progress has been made; for example a new and quieter road surface on the B3047 through Itchen Abbas, talking to those organising cycle events in the Valley and new playground equipment. In some areas, such as commenting on planning applications, it is sad to say that when we highlight that something is contrary to the Parish Plan we feel that it is of little account to those making the decisions; very frustrating, but the only thing is to keep trying. Our replies to the list are being sent in and it will be interesting to see the reaction, if any.

Those who keep an eye on such things will have seen that we held an extra Full Council Meeting at the end of September. The purpose was to look forward and in the first instance produce a wish list of all the objectives we would like to achieve, both in the current and forthcoming year and into the more distant future. We divided the list into near, medium (up to 3 years hence) and long term objectives. After the best part of two hours work

including some useful discussion, we have produced quite a long list, especially for this and next year. Like all such exercises they are fine for vision but reality and the art of the possible have to be considered as well. As ever most items on the list cost money, so at present priorities are being decided which in turn will help fix objectives, short term or longer. From that we will be looking at funding and for next year producing a budget.

You may have already seen from the Itchen List, our website or from reading the notice boards that the Pre-Submission Consultation for the South Downs Local Plan is now in progress. This document sets out planning policies across the whole of the National Park, how land should be used and what can be built where. It covers from the present up to 2032. It is therefore of great significance to all of us in the Itchen Valley. The Parish Council has already responded to earlier draft documents, parts of which were in our opinion neither realistic nor in the best interests of the Valley. Naturally we as the Parish Council will be submitting our comments on this version as well. We would also like to encourage as many residents as possible to read the relevant parts of the document and submit their comments. You can do this on line using [www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/national-park-local-plan](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/national-park-local-plan). Please note that the deadline for submissions is 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017.

We may not get all we want but if we do nothing then we have no grounds for complaint. Hopefully the greater the response the more likely that our voice will be heard and the better the outcome.

*Patrick Appleby,, Parish Council Chairman*





## Roast Beetroot Soup

The clocks are changing and soup is starting to be more appealing than salad. This is an easy recipe taking advantage of

beetroot's natural sweetness and lovely colour. Just make sure it stays away from your favourite white shirt!

4 medium beetroot

4 medium carrots

6 tomatoes

1 large onion

2 cloves garlic

2 tablespoons rapeseed or other vegetable oil

1 litre beef stock (made with a cube)

Scrub the beetroot and remove the leaves. Scrub the carrots and cut into

chunks; halve the tomatoes. Skin the onion and cut into quarters.

Line a good sized roasting tin with heavy tin foil (it makes it much easier to wash up). Cut the beetroot into large chunks, coat with the oil and season well. Put into a hot oven (180) and roast for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven, add the carrots, tomatoes, onion and the garlic cloves (still in their skins). Toss all the vegetables together with some more salt, and roast for a further 30 minutes or until they are soft. When cool enough, slip the garlic out of their skins, and tip all the vegetables into a large saucepan. Add the stock, bring to a boil and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Use a stick liquidiser to make a smooth soup (you can sieve it if you want perfection) and adjust the seasoning. Serve garnished with a swirl of yoghurt or crème fraiche, or a crumble of feta cheese.

*Verity Coleman*

## Our favourite dogs - No. 3 in a series

---



Maggie and Percy are two dachshunds. Maggie is wire haired and Percy smooth and they are the most adorable dogs I have ever seen. It is impossible not to stroke them. The thing I love the most about them is when you open the door and they come running up, Maggie squeaking with excitement for about five minutes and rolling over, begging you to tickle her tummy. Percy on the other hand yaps his welcome and tries to climb onto your knee. Percy is definitely more subtle and on a cold night will really cuddle up to you.

*Alice, aged 10*



Maggie and Percy are the best dogs in the world. They have very different personalities. Percy never likes walking in the rain as he doesn't like getting his

feet wet but Maggie doesn't mind. They don't like being separated and always look out for each other. When Percy joined the household, as a puppy four years ago, he was put in a separate cage from Maggie, but that first night he went and slept with Maggie! And so started a great friendship between the two of them.

*Max, age 8*

They are very loving, lovable dogs but they can sometimes show a naughty streak, and Maggie especially loves visiting various Valley gardens if let off her lead, searching for food and new scents!

*Liz Platt (Maggie and Percy's owner, and Alice and Max's grandmother).*

## Opera: Power, Passion & Politics

---

The Victoria and Albert Museum may sound an unlikely venue for an exhibition about opera; however, should you decide to go, you'll be in for a treat. The V&A has collaborated with the Royal Opera House to produce an innovative approach entitled *Opera: Power, Passion & Politics*. The exhibition is in seven sections. The first features Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, the first opera to be produced in Venice in the 1600s, and goes on to Handel's works in London a century later. Next comes Mozart in Vienna, with his *Marriage of Figaro*, followed by Verdi's *Nabucco* premièred in Milan in 1841, providing an anthem for the Risorgimento with the famous Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves *Va Pensiero*. In each case a single opera is chosen which is put into its social and political context. Everyone attending the exhibition is equipped with earphones so that you hear appropriate operatic excerpts as you move around. Each



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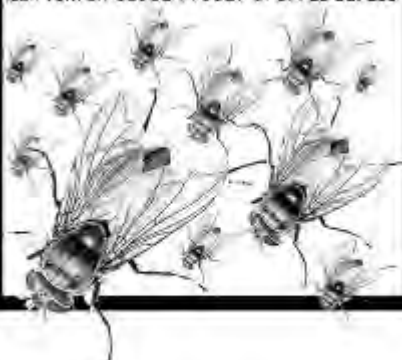
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section has displays of artefacts that relate to the work being featured. These vary from Venetian glassware to an almost full-size theatre set with contemporary stage machinery. In some cases, there is also a large screen showing scenes from a production of the chosen opera - the Figaro sextet is particularly delightful, as he discovers his true parents.

The experience of viewing the exhibition is not quite totally immersive, but one's senses are focused very strongly not just on the music but on the overall context of its composition.

Following Verdi, the erotic strand becomes stronger with Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, complete with the Venusberg music choreographed in a range of explicit 20<sup>th</sup> century productions. Richard Strauss' shocking composition *Salome* is the next featured work, the première being set in Dresden, the only major German city with a sufficiently liberal outlook to permit such a work to be performed. The closing scene is chosen to

exemplify the work, with Salome embracing the severed head of John the Baptist, herself drenched in blood. Strong stuff indeed!

Finally, the 20th century is illustrated by a number of operas, including Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Poulenc's *Dialogue des Carmélites*, and several others. This is probably the least satisfactory section, as there is relatively little context provided for these very different works.

We spent an hour and a half taking all this in, and came out a little overwhelmed but feeling that the exhibition had been very successful in conveying some of the essence of the complexity of opera to people with widely different levels of knowledge about the subject.

*Peter McManus*

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## Autumn sparkle

---



Now you have drunk all the rosé and the Pimms (cheats, of course, see Sept issue), it's time to think about what to

drink as the nights are closing in. Some fizz may be in order for winter parties, and rather than reaching for champagne it may be worth considering some of the sparkling wines that are made closer to home. Champagne has set the standard for centuries but there is now some real competition in the market. The Grande Marques champagnes such as Moët & Chandon or Taittinger produce large volumes and work very hard to maintain consistency from year to year. However, they spend huge amounts on marketing and advertising (pick up any glossy magazine in the run up to Christmas) which adds enormously to their costs. An alternative is to find grower champagne which is made by the farmer who grew the grapes. The price may not be much lower than the Grand Marques, but often one can find more interesting wines. I have found a good source of grower champagne in Basingstoke with a wide selection and sound advice.

An alternative would be to consider English sparkling wine which has come on leaps and bounds in the last ten years. Global warming is helping, combined with state-of-the-art vinification facilities. The question is what to buy, and there is help at hand: on 24 and 25<sup>th</sup> November, the

Winchester Wine Festival takes place in the Guildhall and at least 10 different English wine makers will be showing their wares. It is therefore easy to compare and contrast and work out what you like. There are lots of other exhibitors so there is much fun to be had. Tickets cost £30 which includes a Riedel wine glass. For more information and tickets, their website is [www.thewinefestival.co.uk](http://www.thewinefestival.co.uk).

Supermarkets can be good sources of English wine, but it's worth waiting until they have an offer so you get the best value. Wines to enjoy include Chapel Down and Camel Valley, or, if you want to push the boat out a little, Hattingley Valley is produced locally at Lower Wield.

*The Itchen Barfly*

## Comings and goings

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Itchen Abbas: We welcome Sophie and Jamie Reid and their daughter Isla who have moved into Old Station Road from Easton

*Claire Hunt*

Easton: Whilst sorry to say goodbye to the Reids who moved from Dymoke Barn Cottage, we welcome Daniel and Amber Pennie, with Frank (18) and Miles (16) who have moved to Yew Tree Cottage from Winchester

*Judith Mezger*

*Is there anyone who could advise the IVN whom to welcome to Avington and Martyr*

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Brew with a View	Wed	3 - 5 pm		Ina	01962 779465
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rehearsals	Sunday	4.30 pm			

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## The Practical Gardener

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We are in the season of colour yet it seems quite confused, with many trees still green and others devoid of leaves. We often talk about the weather and yet what gardeners want and need is consistency. It's absolutely what we have not had this year. So August was miserable and now we are having a prolonged warm spell. There's no evidence of autumn in my rose garden. However we do know winter is on its way and we have to prepare. It's time to consider digging up and moving tender plants inside. I have started with fuchsias and geraniums which will keep well in a frost free environment. Many annuals and perennials are still in full flower. I have found this year to be one of growth so on my birthday wish



list was plant supports. More about that later.

Now is the time to prepare the greenhouse for winter. To do this I remove everything and pressure wash inside and out. I take off all the auto vents and then do fumigation. Sulphur candles are the best treatment but difficult to find. When the fumigation is done and any pests are killed I bubble wrap the inside. It's a tedious job which







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takes some time but for two reasons, it's worthwhile. Firstly it helps to make the place frost free and secondly when heat is needed, a lot less electricity is used so green points are scored. I start to move in lots of tender plants like fuchsias, but I also dig up and repot geraniums which will continue to flower during the winter. Also some of the plants in hanging baskets can be saved. I find it a bit trial and error but worth doing.

In the vegetable garden, there has been



a lot of tidying up. The summer crops are gone but those which will survive the winter still need our care. You can never let your guard down where pigeons are concerned. It's time to plant onions and garlic, two very rewarding products which really need the minimum of work. Home grown onions have twice the flavour of those in the shops.

I previously wrote about a new shredder, the Bosch AXT2200. I'm sorry to say I'm taking it back as it simply does not work. It jams in under a minute and fails properly to cut up long stems. This was a *Which?* best buy. However I found blogs in Australia with the same experience as my own, except the language was more colourful. I've been shredding constantly this year so I have to find a better replacement.



A second tool has also gone to the scrapyard, my Stihl power unit. Five years ago it needed repairs costing over £100. This time another carburettor is required and the bill would have been £150+. Even though I switched to Aspen fuel at £19 per gallon, it's made no difference. Finally the supplier admitted Stihl is way behind in engine design. It's a tool that has to be used all the time, so quite unsuited to small gardeners. Once again I am convinced battery power is the way to go.

Happy gardening.

*Tony Gaster*

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## **A sense of fun at Martyr Worthy**

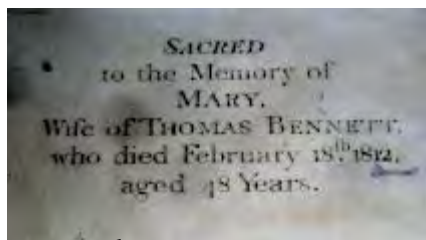
Visiting St Swithun's church primarily to admire the flowers at a recent wedding, I was idly reading a plaque on the north wall of the nave in memory of Revd Freshfield and his five daughters.

Did he really have five? It would seem so. Just like Mr & Mrs Bennet in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. You know, the drama series with Colin Firth and that wet shirt.

I moved my stare up the wall and leisurely took in the names on the plaque above. Surely not? Oh yes! The memorial above the one to the five daughters was to Mary Bennett, the wife of Thomas Bennett, who had died about 140 years earlier.

Had someone placed them adjacent to one another as an amusement? If they were so aligned then congratulations. Someone's just got the joke!

Vernon Tottle





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## Fabulous Fungi

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Fungi are the unsung heroes of autumn - they come out in force to fuel our forests, prettify our paths and breathe life into our beloved wild places. As the trees shed their leaves and the land braces for winter, the humble mushroom thrives.

Fungi are part of a vast and varied group of decomposers, and play a vital role in our ecosystem. By transforming dead animals and vegetation into raw nutrients that can be absorbed by plants, fungi sustain and nurture the plant life around them; without fungi, England's green and pleasant land would likely be an unpleasant shade of brown.

There really is no end to the generosity of fungi – when they're not pumping nutrients into the soil, they're providing a valuable food source for a host of birds and mammals, including badgers, deer, mice and squirrels.

From great gelatinous blobs on the ground to the neat toadstools on which a fairy might perch, fungi come in a spectacular range of shapes, sizes, colours and (sometimes very pungent) smells. There are some bizarre varieties of fungi, some attractive and dainty, and some so revolting that even the most committed fungi enthusiasts retch at the sight of them.

The infamous stinkhorn, for example, emits a foul odour like rotting flesh, so strong that it can be detected from as far as 20 metres away. At the start of its life the stinkhorn resembles an egg, later developing a slimy red stalk which may grow up to 20cm high. Its dark green cap is covered with a stinking



mucous designed to attract flies. The flies feed from the stinkhorn and disperse its spores wherever they next land – an unusual method of reproduction but effective nonetheless.

At the other end of the spectrum we have the fly agaric, the cheerful red mushroom decorated with fetching white spots. Often portrayed in children's fairy stories with a pixie sitting on the top, the bright red caps can measure 15cm across. It is a little known fact that the signature white spots that characterise this fungus are actually the remains of a veil which covers the immature mushroom.

Fungi are an important part of the woodland ecosystem, and excessive picking can cause irreparable damage. It's important we remember just how important our native fungi are – in the immortal (if slightly adapted) words of Aristotle, 'education and morels make the good man'.

*Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust*

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## Driver Skills Scheme 60+

Hampshire County Council operates a driving appraisal scheme for Hampshire residents called the 'Driver Skills Scheme 60+'. The appraisal takes place

from the person's home using their own car and is delivered by specially selected and trained Driving Standards Agency (DSA) Approved Driving Instructors (ADI) who have a good understanding of the needs of experienced drivers.

This scheme is aimed at people aged 60 years and over who have an interest in updating their skills and knowledge, want help in adapting to a new vehicle or simply want to gain confidence. The scheme is not designed for those who have a diagnosed notifiable medical condition.

This is an informal and confidential appraisal with the aim of enhancing current skills and updating knowledge to ensure people carry on driving for as long as they are safe. It is not a test so there is no pass or fail element. The assessor looks at the way the driver deals with various traffic situations on roads that he or she normally drives on and makes recommendations to help ensure on-going safety. The appraisal also includes an eyesight check (reading a number plate).

Following the practical drive, each driver is given a comprehensive debrief, where any concerns or remedial actions are discussed. A detailed report is also prepared and sent to the person's home. The appraisal lasts 90 minutes and costs £35 for drivers of 60+ who live in Hampshire.

To book you can contact the Road Safety Team on 01962 846100, [road.safety@hants.gov.uk](mailto:road.safety@hants.gov.uk), or book online at: [www.hants.gov.uk/shop](http://www.hants.gov.uk/shop), follow the links for Road Safety and Driver Training.

## Cover Photo answer

The cover photo shows the bridge at the bottom of Mill Lane in Abbots

## Local monthly information

### Waste collections in November

Black bins and green bags on Fridays 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Green bins on Fridays 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

### Cameo

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November.

### Farmers' Markets in Winchester

Sundays 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> November.

### Parish Council Full Meeting

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November Itchen Abbas VH

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**School term timetable** operates all month (but see below)

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**Saturday service** (same for the whole month)

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08:23 11:23 14:23 17:23

Towards Alresford:

09:19 12:19 15:19 18:09

**No Sunday or bank holiday service**

All times shown are at Itchen Abbas.

Times are 5 minutes later (or earlier) at Easton.

**Important:**

30<sup>th</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> November may see a restricted coach service operating mornings only due to the road closure at Itchen Stoke. The last service back from Winchester will be at 1pm. The bus stops have full details of timings.





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